



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Public Hearing Testimony

Judiciary Committee

February 24, 2016



H.B. No. 5344 - AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) **offers the following comments** regarding H.B. No. 5344, An Act Concerning Support for Animals that are Neglected or Treated Cruelly.

While DCF is not taking a formal position regarding the bill before you, we would like to offer comments regarding the link between animal cruelty and child abuse and neglect. The American Humane Association has published a considerable amount of information documenting the correlation between animal abuse, family violence and other forms of community violence. As you may be aware, the American Humane Association is, in addition to its advocacy regarding the protection of animals, a national leader in the child welfare arena. In fact, DCF worked closely with American Humane Association in the development of our differential response initiative.

For the past five years, DCF has collaborated with the Department of Agriculture on training for state, regional and municipal animal control officers (ACO) to cross report suspected child abuse or neglect and instances of an animal being treated cruelly, harmed or neglected. Our two agencies have also partnered together regarding the sharing of information concerning reports of suspected animal neglect or cruelty. Section 17a-100c of the General Statutes requires the Commissioners of Children and Families and Agriculture to report annually to the Committee on Children regarding the number of written reports regarding actual or suspected instances of animal neglect or cruelty received from employees of the Department of Children and Families pursuant to section 17a-100a and from animal control officers pursuant to section 22-329b.

Between June 1, 2014 and December 31, 2015, the Department of Children and Families has received a total of one hundred twenty-eight (128) written reports from the Department of Agriculture. Of the one hundred twenty-eight (128) reports received, sixty-seven (67) had histories with DCF; however, nine (9) met the standard for an investigation by DCF based on the information in the written report and were accepted. Attached to this testimony is a monthly summary of these reports.

**Department of Children and Families
Summary of Suspected Animal Abuse Reports
June 2014 through December 2015**

Month	Reports Received	Open Case	Prior DCF History	Reports that Met Standard for Investigation	Review Still Open	Cases Opened
June 2014	1	0	1	0	0	0
July 2014	1	0	1	0	0	0
August 2014	1	0	1	0	0	0
September 2014	2	0	1	0	0	0
October 2014	11	1	5	0	0	0
November 2014	22	2	8	1	0	0
December 2014	3	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL 2014	41	3	17	1	0	0
January 2015	12	2	7	1	0	1
February 2015	8	0	4	0	0	0
March 2015	8	0	2	0	0	0
April 2015	8	1	4	3	0	3
May 2015	3	0	2	1	0	1
June 2015	6	0	2	0	0	0
July 2015	11	0	4	1	0	1
August 2015	5	0	1	0	0	0
September 2015	10	3	5	1	0	1
October 2015	5	1	2	0	0	0
November 2015	6	0	2	1	0	1
December 2015	5	2	3	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL 2015	87	9	38	8	0	8
TOTAL	128	12	55	9	0	8